

REMARKS

Claims 4-13 have been amended. Claims 14-16 are newly added. No claims have been cancelled. Support for the Amendment may be found throughout the embodiments disclosed in the as-filed Specification. No new subject matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 4-16 are pending in the present application.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

I. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 4-6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,937,391 to Ikeda, et al. ("Ikeda"). Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Independent claims 4, 8 and 11 have been amended to recite features drawn to a providing a Mix and Match (M&M) discount in a virtual mall. The features are amply supported by the disclosed embodiments in the written description. By way of example only, the disclosed embodiments provide that the M&M discount is achieved and performed when at least two different items subject to the M&M discount are respectively purchased from different shops in the virtual mall. When a purchaser buys one item subject to M&M discount in one of the shops, the purchaser is notified that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount. (See Applicant's Specification; page 13, lines 8-19 and FIG 12). Further, as recited in newly added claims 14-16, the notification may further include notifying the purchaser that the purchaser can get the M&M discount if the purchaser buys at least one other M&M item at a different shop. (See Applicant's Specification; FIG. 12: M2). Therefore, the purchaser is potentially motivated to go to another shop and buy another item subject to an M&M discount to get the M&M discount.

The cited portions of Ikeda simply make no mention or suggestion of an M&M discount in a virtual mall, much less, the feature of notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount based on the M&M discount item flag. The cited portions of Ikeda merely disclose a point-service system in a virtual shopping mall. In particular, Ikeda discloses how to issue points to consumers and how consumers may redeem the issued points among

virtual shops. Ikeda discloses the redemption is merely “to redeem the points for discount, refund or an awarding gift.” (Ikeda; col. 1, lines 32-33 of Ikeda; *see also* Ikeda; claim 8).

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the cited portions of Ikeda do not disclose, teach, or suggest, each and every limitation of claims 4, 8 and 11. Claims 5, 6, 9 and 12 depend from claims 4, 8 and 11 respectively and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claims 4, 8 and 11, and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 4-6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Ikeda should be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

New claims 14-16 depend from claims 4, 8 and 11 respectively and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claims 4, 8 and 11, and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, Applicant requests claims 14-16 be allowed, as well.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 7, 10 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ikeda in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,643,624 to Phillippe et al. (“Phillippe”). Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

As discussed above, the cited portions of Ikeda fail to disclose or render each and every feature of claim 4, 8 and 11.

Further, Applicant submits that the cited portions of Phillippe do not overcome the shortcomings of Ikeda. For example, the cited portions of Phillippe make no mention or suggestion of an M&M discount in a virtual mall, much less, notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount based on the M&M discount item flag.

Claims 7, 10 and 13 depend respectively from claims 4, 8 and 11, and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claims 4, 8 and 11, and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 7, 10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of Ikeda further in view of Phillippe should be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

III. CONCLUSION

All rejections have been addressed. It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should there be any questions or concerns regarding this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

PILLSBURY WINTHROP SHAW PITTMAN LLP



ERIC B. COMPTON
Reg. No. 54,806
Tel. No. 703.770.7721
Fax No. 703.770.7901

Date: August 28, 2007
P.O. Box 10500
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 770-7900